

Article:

The relationship between cultural sensitivity and perceived stress among nurses working with foreign patients

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Abstract:

Visits by a variety of foreigners to Turkey and extension of their stays highlight the need to provide sufficient, culturespecific healthcare, which in turn should significantly affect nursing actions. Nursing care is affected by cultural characteristics of the individuals receiving care as well as the cultural characteristics of the nurses who shape the patient's plan of care. Nurses play an important role in coordinating the patient education and care, and thus should ensure appropriate treatment for foreign patients, as for all patients (Dikmetas 2006, Douglas et al. 2011). Due to the outbreak of civil war in Syria, there has been heavy immigration to Kilis, a front-line province in Turkey; these refugees have been accepted to the refugee camp at the € Onc€upinar border gate since March 2012.

The purpose of this study was to determine the relationship between cultural sensitivity and perceived stress on nurses caring for individuals of foreign nationality in Turkey.

Discussion:

This study was focused on the relationship between cultural sensitivity and the perceived stress of nurses working in Kilis State Hospital. Most of the participants were young, unmarried and had a short range of work experience. Our findings were similar to expected results because Kilis State Hospital is small and often employs newly graduated nurses (Basara et al. 2013).

Conclusion:

We found that cultural sensitivity and the perceived stress level of nurses working at Kilis State Hospital was at a medium level, the former being affected by perceived stress. Our results suggest that training programmes on cultural sensitivity and stress management can be developed and patient care plans can be adapted to patients of different backgrounds in conformity with applicable standards (Douglas et al. 2011) so that nurses can attain higher levels of cultural sensitivity, and in turn feel less stressed. Moreover, nurses can be given foreign language training and supported for an international experience abroad with the aim of increasing their cultural sensitivity, while decreasing stress. Lack of intercultural sensitivity can lead to mistrust and misunderstandings, to an inability to cooperate in between nurses and patients. Improving nurse' intercultural sensitivity will help their intercultural

communication more successfully and effectively. Therefore, increased cultural sensitivity can improve nursing care and health well-being. Nurses often experience workplace stressors when they are unable to deal with cultural differences. Communication is the central factor in providing transcultural care and is one of the most significant challenges when a nurse and patient do not speak the same language. This highlights the importance for healthcare workers to integrate culture and language to improve health outcomes for patients from diverse cultural backgrounds (Beer & Chipps 2014).